

THE JUNK BOX

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President's Message

On November 27th, 1965, at the Michigan State Numismatic Society's Convention held in Detroit, the birth of the Michigan Token and Medal Society came into being.

Since that time, we have signed up seventy-four members, which to me is outstanding! I have long felt a need for a group, such as this, on a state-wide basis. There are many benefits which can, and will, be derived from being a member of a Specialty Group, such as ours. I would like to elaborate on just a couple.

First, we will conduct at least two meetings a year in conjunction with the Michigan State Numismatic Society's Spring and Fall Conventions. Possibly we can hold more meetings, in connection with some of the larger shows being held in the State from time to time. These meetings will be conducted in a very informal manner, and we will try not to be wrapped up in a lot of time consuming legislation, thereby giving all of us more time to get to know each other, and to relate our findings to our fellow collectors, and also to have more time for good "ole-fashioned" swap-sessions!

Another point I would like to bring up, is that of Educational programs. We hope to conduct such programs from time to time at our meetings. These need not be of a long drawn-out nature, but I do feel that programs of this type are essential. In fact--we have plans now in progress to have a slide program pertaining to Tokens and Medals to be presented by Harriet Nordhof at our Grand Rapids meeting on April 16th. I am sure this will be enjoyable and informative to all present.

We are also going to put out a Bulletin at least four times a year, and possibly more frequently later on--depending on the amount of material received. The point that I would like to make to all of the members is, This Is Your Paper! Take advantage of it. Write articles pertaining to your special interest. In this way you will be helping all of the collectors in the organization. Also, if you have questions on any particular token or medal, have it printed in the paper. Possibly someone in the Society can help you. I might add that any time you wish to have an article published in the "Mich-Matist"--official publication of the M.S.N.S., this can be arranged. We will have a page set aside in each issue, for the use of our group.

At this time, I would also like to say that I was honored at being elected the first President to serve you. You can rest assured that I will do everything, to the best of my ability, to benefit the Society. I feel that the Officers who were elected to serve with me, are competent leaders and dedicated advocates of our hobby. It will be a pleasure to serve with them. If you should have a question in regard to a specific token or medal, or in regard to the Society itself, please feel free to contact any one of the Officers, and I feel sure they will do their best to help you.

(over)

President's Message - Cond.

I am looking forward to renewing old acquaintances, and meeting the new members at the M.S.K.S. Convention in Grand Rapids this Spring. I certainly hope you can all attend.

My best regards,

R. K. (Bob) Iusch

Bulletin Name

The membership submitted three names for our bulletin--"The Junk-Box"; "The Quest" and "The Michi-Tams". After getting the opinion of several of the members, it was decided to use the suggestion of "The Junk-Box", unless anyone has any other names to come up with.

ROSTER LISTING

With this issue, we are listing our membership, and in an attempt to get to know each other better, listing our interests. As can easily be seen, although we all like tokens and medals, our interests are quite varied.

MICHIGAN COMMEMORATIVE LISTING

Congratulations is due to Jim Curto, for the excellent job he did in the preparation of the illustrated list of Michigan Commemoratives in the January 1966 issue of the TAMS Journal.

Membership in TAMS is highly recommended to all collectors of tokens and medals--cost is low, and benefits are many. Application forms can be obtained from George D. Hatie, or our Secretary, Harriet J. Nordhof.

MEMBERSHIP CARDS

We have ordered Membership Cards to be printed, and these should be available for distribution in the near future. Thank you for your patience.

Token Donation

A friend of our organization, Phillip Markovitz, has donated a Michigan token--\$1.00 Trade Check from Henter (clothing store). This will be auctioned at our April meeting.

NEW YORK SUBWAY TOKENS

A note has been received from Joseph Abiuso (#73). He advises that if any of the members would like to receive a Transportation Token of the New York City - Transit System (subway), he will send them one for 15¢ and a self-stamped envelope. He is also willing to trade tokens of other cities--one for one, of tokens now in use. However, with trades, he would like to have you drop him a note first, in order to avoid duplication.

WANTED: MICHIGAN TOKENS

Pete Hartley (#18) advises that he is looking for the following Michigan tokens, listed by Curto in TAMS: Vicksburg; Camp Grayling; Onaway; Tawas; Harbor Springs; Hart; Manistee; Reed City; Fremont; Boyne City; Ishpeming; Saginaw 1907; Kalamazoo 1929; Sault Ste. Marie 1932; Cheboygan 1939; River Rouge 1947; Port Huron 1949 and Marlette 1962.

He is also looking for Wooden Nickels as follows: Allegan County (Set of 3) 1934; Charlevoix 5¢ Black, 1935; Midland (Set of 6) 1950; Muskegon Heights (Set of 3) 1953; and Romeo (Set of 3) 1935.

If anyone has any of these, Pete would appreciate hearing from you.

THANK YOU - COLLECTORS NEWS

During the last month "Collectors News" was kind enough to send sample copies of their publication to our entire membership. We sincerely appreciate their efforts in our behalf.

MICHIGAN TRADE TOKENS

We are very pleased to report that beginning with the next issue of our "Junk-Box", the listing of Michigan Trade Tokens, compiled by Marie Johnson will be started. We certainly appreciate Marie's co-operation on this, and hope that all of our members will help us to add additional items to her listing.

Address all correspondence to the Secretary--Harriet J. Nordhof, 300 West 27th St., Holland, Mich. 49423. Thank you.

THE GREAT RIOT

P. H. (Jim) Frans

The recent transportation tie-up in New York City, brought back memories of the Street-Car Riot in Muskegon, Michigan which began on August 1, 1919.

Before going into the riot, perhaps a brief history of the transportation company involved is in order.

The Muskegon City Railway Company was organized during September of 1883. It owned and operated about eleven miles of track. From the Eastern limits of the city, it traversed the main throughfare to Lake Michigan Park, on the shore of the Great Lake, six miles from the center of town. At the corner of Jefferson Street and Western Avenue, (which was then considered to be the center of the down-town area) the side-line started for Muskegon Heights, going by way of Sanford Street. This line terminated at Mona Lake--an amusement park and picnic area. The Pine Street line started from the same corner, and had about two miles of track, and extended to the Evergreen and Oakdale cemeteries--the Eastern limits of the city.

The Muskegon City Railway Company operated from 1883 to 1897. From 1883 to 1890, they operated horse-drawn cars. After 1890, the company electrified the lines. During 1897 the management changed, and the Company was then named The Muskegon Traction and Lighting Company, and it operated under this name until 1929.

After 1890 the cars were operated by the overhead trolley electric system, giving rapid, convenient and safe transportation.

The powerhouse was a substantial stone and brick structure, fitted with a battery of huge boilers, and a large cooper condensing Corliss engine. Four 500 horse-power generators and all necessary adjuncts for a complete electric motor system was installed at a cost of \$50,000.00.

The car-house, or car-barn as it was generally called, was erected at a cost of \$15,000.00. The structure was ninety feet by two-hundred feet, with a storage capacity for fifty cars. It also contained the offices, repair shops, storerooms, etc.

About sixty men were employed in operating the line.

The Muskegon City Railway Company owned a beautiful park known as "Lake Michigan Park". The park was located at the Western terminal of the line. It was fifty-eight acres in size, and was situated between Muskegon Lake and Lake Michigan, on the West side of the city. It was shaded by a natural grove of virgin beech, pine and oak trees, with beautiful sand dunes and dales and the roaring waves of the Great Lake at it's feet. There were two commodious pavilions, a toboggan slide, bath-houses, picnic tables, a figure eight (derby racer), merry-go-round, ferris wheel, billiard hall, bowling alleys, roller-skating rink, and a beautiful dance hall overlooking Lake Michigan. Many of the known bands in the late 80's and early 90's, played in this hall.

It gives us a nostalgic feeling, when we think of the music from those great bands, drifting over the Great Lake, as we sat in the beautiful white beach sand in the moonlight, with the waves gently lapping the shore on a warm summer night. Needless to say, the last trolley back to town at night, or very early morning, was filled to capacity with couples reluctant to leave!

A nickel, or "jitney" (as the five-cent piece was called then), took the pleasure seeker to the park from any part of the city or Muskegon Heights. The park was free for all pleasure seekers. This provided an inexpensive and pleasant place for a day's recreation, and it was largely patronized as a picnic grounds.

The management was conducted on a liberal basis, and reaped the rewards of a well merited success. G. A. Nims was President of the line. He was a prominent attorney, and was interested in railroads twenty-five years before the trolley line was organized. J. W. Moon was Vice-President. He was prominently connected with monetary and manufacturing institutions in Muskegon. Wm. B. McLaughlin was Treasurer, and Robert A. Fleming was Secretary. L. B. Howard was Purchasing Agent, and F. W. Thompson was Superintendent.

It is not generally known that the Muskegon City Railway Company and the Chicago and West Michigan Railway (now a part of the Chesapeake and Ohio system), jointly owned the Lake Harbor Railroad. In 1891, or thereabouts, they constructed five miles of track extending from the life saving station (Coast Guard Building) at Lake Michigan Park to the Hackley Assembly Grounds (Lake Harbor), along the beach of Lake Michigan. This line was operated by a light engine, and regular coaches, and made hourly trips during the season, and as often as was necessary at other times.

The officers of this line were J. W. Moon, President; F. A. Nims, Vice-President; Thomas Munroe, Secretary; W. B. McLaughlin, Treasurer; (all of Muskegon), and Charles M. Heald of Grand Rapids--a well known railroad man of the time, officiated as General Manager.

The Muskegon Traction and Lighting Company operated the trolley line successfully, and without incident, until July 29th, 1919, when the company announced it would be necessary to raise the fare from five-cents, or a jitney, to seven-cents to meet union demands for a pay increase. This announcement by J. T. Young, President of the company at the time, cancelled a ten year franchise with the city. The union demanded an increase of over five cents an hour.

The men were paid forty-cents an hour for the first six months with the company, forty-three cents an hour for the next six months, and were paid forty-five cents an hour after one year of service.

Mayor Moore of Muskegon and Mayor Schoenberg of Muskegon Heights announced that they did not feel an increase of two-cents in fares was justified!

On August 1st, trouble began when the company tried to collect the seven-cents fare. When disorders started car-men were harrassed, and the company appealed to the mayor for protection.

The disorder began in the section of the city known as Lakeside--one of the cities industrial areas. In the evening, when the men were leaving the factories in the Lakeside area, they began stoneing the cars. One car was actually overturned; switches were jammed; and logs, wood and other debris was spread along the tracks. Some of the men boarding the cars would only pay a nickel, others six-cents, and still others paid the full seven-cents. The conductors and motor-men, trying to avoid trouble, took whatever the workmen gave them, and allowed them to ride. The company then appealed for police protection.

On August 4th, a new ordinance to control fares tied up the committee. The traction officials were told they would have to secure permission to operate the cars under the proposed plan. This measure would not be effective until August 16th. Opposition to renewing the franchise with the company was building up. The necessity for a vote by the

people was developing. The violence quieted down somewhat, and on August 6th, it began to look as if the mob was satisfied.

Mayors Moore of Muskegon and Schoenburg of the Heights asked people with cars or trucks to give the workmen a lift, to help them get to work on time.

But August 6th proved to be just the calm before the storm! Violence again broke out in the late afternoon, and then pandemonium! Cars were stoned. The conductors and motor-men were forced out of the cars, and the mob took over. Cars would be deliberately run into each other at high speed. At track crossings, and switches, (or side tracks), the mob would drive one car into another--broadside, nearly cutting it in two. Windows were smashed; seats were slashed; bell cords were stripped from their mountings; fare-boxes were smashed, and torn from their mountings, or carried off; the long brass brake handles were taken loose, and used as clubs to smash everything that could be broken. Street cars and their trolley trailers were overturned, and blocked the main thorough-fares of the city. Pine Street was blocked in several places. Sanford Street was blocked. Jefferson Street to Western Avenue looked as if an invading army had just gone through. Damaged and overturned cars and debris littered the streets. Jefferson Street and Western Avenue corner was completely blocked with smashed cars and trolleys. At 10:00 P.M. on the 6th, a mob of over one thousand strong swooped down on the car barns, located at Franklin and Michigan, and proceeded to systematically wreck the cars there. They began by running the cars into each other, splintering and smashing windows, and damaging them in all ways. When this type of destruction proved too slow, they took bricks, clubs and other missiles, and wielded them with reckless abandon. Fare-boxes, bell cords, curtains, and other attached material were stripped from their frames. Cars were left broadside to the track, and the mob would run other cars into them--broadside. Cars were run into each other at main intersections, and telescoped. Others were tipped over, blocking the street.

By the next day, the city was bottled up by street-car ruins. The city resembled a battle-ground, where a master strategist had blocked all lines of exit with wreckage. The system was in total collapse. There were about ten cars left on their trucks, or wheels. Less than ten cars would be able to run--after two or three days of repairs. Seventeen more could probably be ready in ten days or more. Special officers were sworn in to help regain order.

In bold print the next day, the "Muskegon Chronicle" printed the following:

MUSKEGON'S DISGRACE

"Muskegon stands today before it's neighboring municipalities of the State and the Nation, a city disgraced! We have been advertised to the utmost borders of the Nation, as a city of hoodlums and thugs.

The most striking feature is the gross stupidity of it all, to wantonly destroy the rolling-stock of the Street Railway Company, which is so essential to the permanent prosperity of the city, and carrying on our daily lives, is not merely criminal. Criminal it was, to be sure, and every man and boy who participated in this insane act, thereby branded himself!"

The following day, sleepy citizens sat on the curb, with a dazed air of "What has happened?". Tourists wandered down to the "No Mans Land" of the traction company, where trolley cars were piled in a grotesque array.

The children had a field day. Bare-foot, oblivious of broken glass, they tread the decks of the battleships, and played "Street Car Conductor and Motor-Man". "Board" was the cry; "Ding, Ding, Ding" went the bells, and here and there came the cry, "Let's finish the job!" The youngsters echoed the cry of the night before.

But the morning calm was unbroken on August 8th. Three men, who were the ring-leaders of the riot mob, were jailed. One boy, hurt in the car smash-ups, died.

During the riot, Muskegon and Muskegon Heights allowed jitney buses to operate without license. This act gave the buses a good opportunity to get a foothold in the transportation business.

On August 20th, the street-cars began running again. They were allowed a one-cent raise in fare, and were charging six-cents. They now had rivals--Jitney buses which ran practically the same routes, and charging five-cents.

As time went on, the buses cut in more and more on the trolleys, and in 1929, the inevitable happened. The trolley cars faded into what we now refer to as "yester-year"--the gone and almost forgotten past.

The fare tokens of the Muskegon Railway Company and the Muskegon Traction Company are now collectors items. The tokens of the horse-cars, and the half-fare children's tokens from the Muskegon Traction and Lighting Company are the most elusive to the collector. To the Vecturist, I say, "Happy Hunting".

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Tokens Issued by Companies Referred to in Preceding Article, As Listed in Atwood's Catalogue of U.S. and Canadian Transportation Tokens:

MUSKEGON 680

Muskegon Railway Co.

B	o	Cb	22	Sd	One Fare (shades)
C	o	Cp	22	Sd	" "
D	o	Cg	22	Sd	" "

Muskegon Trac. & Ltg. Co.

F	o	WM	16	M	Good For One Full Fare (Vars.)
G	o	WM	16	M	Good For One Full Fare

Muskegon Trac. & Ltg. Co. Childs

H	o	WM	23	Bar	Good For One Childs Fare Childs
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